

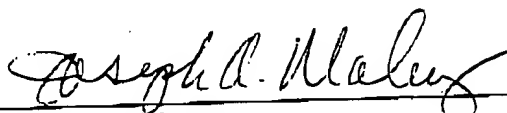
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In view of the above remarks, Applicant submits that all claims are allowable over the cited prior art, and respectfully requests early and favorable notification to that effect. As always, the Examiner is encouraged to call the undersigned with questions or to otherwise expedite prosecution.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: January 2, 2001

By:


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